February 2017

Dear Parents / Caregivers of Students in Year 5 and 6

G Suite (Formally Google Apps for Education)
Last year saw the introduction of "Google Apps for Education" at Woodstock. We decided to move towards Google Apps, now renamed "G Suite", to enhance the way we use technology and share information. We will be continuing to use G Suite in our senior classrooms in 2017.

We understand parents are sometimes concerned or confused when new technology is used in an educational setting. We have prepared this list of frequently asked questions, to help alleviate any concerns with their child using G Suite in the classroom.

FAQs About "G Suite" (Formally known as Google Apps for Education)

What is G Suite?
G Suite is an integrated communication and collaboration solution, hosted by Google and managed by Woodstock School. G Suite provides the ability for students and teachers to communicate, store files and collaborate on documents, spreadsheets, and presentations in real time from school or home, all within a secure "closed campus" online environment. It is important to remember an educational Google account is structured and managed different to a "consumer" or "personal" google account.

How will it be used?
G Suite will provide the ability for students and teachers to store files and collaborate on documents, spreadsheets and presentations in real time from school or home within a "closed campus" online environment. The use of these tools is to support the classroom learning programme. G Suite will often be used as a collaborative tool, as students can work on the same document at the same time.

What can my student/child do with Google Apps?
Students will have easy access to their documents, spreadsheets, and presentations within Google Drive. In addition, students will have additional storage for other files they may need to use between home and school. While there is the option for the students have an email account and calendars, at this time, we have disabled these feature within G Suite.

What if I don't have a computer, how is my child going to get to use it?
The use of G Suite is part of the instructional programme and students have many opportunities to work in their Google Apps account during the school day. Because Google Apps for Education is web based it can be accessed from the public library or other places where computers are available.

Should I get my child their own computer?
The use of Google Apps for Education does not require students to have their own computer or any other personal device. That is an individual family decision.

How will my child access G Suite?
With teacher guidance, students will first activate their google account from a computer at school. Students will be given a google email with their own password. This becomes their username and password for all the google web-based tools used. While G Suite includes an email app, at this stage student's email will be disabled. The children's email address is for logging in purposes only.

Once the students have an active account, they can login by using the sign in button on the Google homepage. Google Chrome is our recommended browser for Google Apps. Learn more about other supported browsers at http://support.google.com/a/bin/answer.py?hl=Guen&answer=33864.

Will my child be required to access G Suite at home?
No. Each family will have different limits placed on their child' access to internet devices.   If you do have a computer or device that can access the internet, we do however encourage your child to take the opportunity to login to his or her Google account to access their information or work.

My child already has a Gmail account, why can't they use that one?
Your child's my.woodstock.school.nz account is the one that will be used at school; we manage and monitor this account to make good use of the education tools to ensure your child's safety. We cannot monitor "personal" Gmail accounts.

Can I see what my child is doing on Google Apps?
Parents are encouraged to explore Google Apps with their children by logging in together. You should login to his or her Woodstock Google account at home and have your child show you what they are currently working on in class.

Privacy and Security Online – How protected is my student from outside people?
Woodstock takes security and privacy of student information seriously. Woodstock Google Apps are not accessible by anyone outside of the Woodstock domain, so your child will be able to work and collaborate in a safe and secure online environment. Classroom teachers will randomly monitor student accounts and create an environment where students are encouraged to share any issues that may arise from inappropriate use. The students will be made aware this is not a private account; it is for school use only. Students will undoubtedly share work with each other and we will work with them to develop their digital citizenship. The basic tenets being; protect yourself, respect yourself, protect others, respect others.   Once your child leaves Woodstock School, their student account will be deleted.

What are the privacy regulations?
Woodstock and G Suite comply with legal requirements for safety and security such as the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Additional information about G Suite security & privacy may be found at https://gsuite.google.co.nz/intl/en_nz/faq/security/

Who has access to my child's account?
The Google Apps Terms of Service agreement with Woodstock contractually ensures that our institution (students and staff) are the sole owners of their data. Google will only access content stored on Apps when an administrator from Woodstock grants Google explicit permission to do so. One example would be to investigate inappropriate use.

Does my child retain copyright of their creations?
The same copyright rules apply to content in G Suite that would apply to any other creation, provided the student is the sole owner.

What protection will Woodstock provide so that my child is not accessing inappropriate content on the web?
There are no advertisements used with G Suite apps. Our school's general internet firewall is provided by the government's Network for Learning Service. Despite this protection, no one method can ever be 100% guaranteed safe. Teaching the principals of digital citizenship and cyber safety is important to help keep our children safe online. If children are using their Google Account at home, we encourage you to spend some time discussing consequences of inappropriate use with your children, monitor their time on devices and perhaps consider using a parental control such as NetNanny.

What Google apps are available and how can I expect my child's teacher to use them?
Woodstock's use of Google Apps for Education will provide students with secure and easy online access to documents, spreadsheet, presentation and communication tools that can be accessed easily from home or school and enhance teacher and student collaboration in the classroom and beyond.

Teachers can use Google Docs to facilitate group projects and use the history tool to see the level of participation of each student in a group. Teachers will be able to give feedback to students directly as all documents are shared online with a teacher.

What if another student deletes their work?
The owner is the only person who can delete a document. Once a document is deleted, no one can access it, including those with whom it was shared.

Why is a Google account necessary for the students; Can't they just write in their books?
The use of G Suite is another tool Woodstock offers to help students and teachers communicate, collaborate, apply critical thinking skills and work creativity. It will be integrated into the classroom learning programme. Students will still be writing in their "traditional" books. We do not see G Suite replacing the need for students to complete written work by hand. The two methods will work alongside each other.

Google Apps for Education provide students an additional opportunity to ask a teacher question electronically, helping students learn to communication in a real world environment.

What are the basic rules for parents to remind children of when using G Suite?
- Do not share passwords.
- GAFE is for school work only.
- Teachers can monitor all items created and shared.
- Be courteous on all documents.

What is the value of G Suite?
- Classroom collaboration,
- Allows for digital citizenship to be taught in a real life context.
- Allows for a controlled and monitored digital environment
- Students and teachers can open and edit their documents quickly.
- No lost work as google saves automatically
- Anytime, anywhere access to Google Docs. Let's users be productive at school or at home.
- Because Google Docs runs in a web browser, students can work from almost any family device.
- Files stored on Google Docs are always accessible and backed-up online.
- Smarter commenting, better feedback Google Docs' intuitive commenting feature is ideal for collaborator feedback.
- Revision history allows users to review document edits over time

Thank you for your support as we use these collaboration tools for 21st century teaching and learning at Woodstock School. If you have any feedback you would like to share, please feel free to get in touch.

I have read this letter and discussed the GAFE Focus Reminders with my child.
I give / don't give permission for my child to use G Suite.

Signed…………………………………………………………….. Date……………………..